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RUSSIANS SENTENCED IN IMMIGRATION AND FRAUD SCHEME

Greenbelt, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that today United States District Court Judge Alexander Williams, Jr. sentenced Igor Kravtsov, age 38, of New York City to 27 months imprisonment in connection with his role in a sophisticated scheme that involved falsifying and creating government documents, and using them to falsify applications to the New York Association for New Americans (NYANA), a City of New York contractor which administered programs under the auspices of the United States Department of Labor. On May 25, 2004, Judge Williams sentenced Peter Graf, a/k/a Dmitry Fetrov, a/k/a Dmitri Olenikov, a/k/a Mark Vainberg, age 35, of New York City, to 18 months imprisonment in connection with the same case. Judge Williams also ordered the defendants to pay a forfeiture in the amount of \$308,750.

Kravtsov pled guilty on April 24, 2003 and Graf pled guilty on June 19, 2003 to count one of an eight-count Superseding Indictment originally filed on February 10, 2003 and unsealed April 19, 2004, charging them with conspiracy to use and obtain documents prescribed by statute and regulation as evidence of authorized stay or employment in the United States, specifically false I-94 and I-797 forms, knowing that such forms were falsely made and procured by fraud and otherwise unlawfully obtained; and using a social security account number on the basis of false information

furnished to the Commissioner of Social Security.

According to the statement of facts made part of the plea agreement, between July 2000 and February 2003, Kravtsov and Graf conspired with Jouri Matsiouk, Andrei Kolomitsyev, Max Bekov and others in a scheme that involved supplying false and fraudulent documents and forms, including Forms I-94, I-97 and U.S. visas, to the Social Security Administration in Maryland and elsewhere in order to obtain social security numbers for aliens in the United States.

In furtherance of the scheme, Graf obtained and sold blank Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) forms to Kravtsov and others for those co-conspirators to use in preparing fraudulent documentation for aliens to present at Social Security offices. Graf also manufactured an official INS entry stamp to use to make the documents presented look more complete and legitimate. Kravtsov, Matsiouk and others charged aliens for the documents that were prepared, usually between \$400 and \$1500 per client. Kravtsov, Matsiouk and others used the false and fraudulent documents to support the aliens' SS-5 applications for social security cards, which were subsequently mailed by the Social Security Administration to retail mailbox locations set up by Kravtsov, Kolomitsyev, Bekov, Matsiouk and others for receipt of those cards. The social security cards so mailed contained social security numbers assigned by the Commissioner of Social Security in the exercise of his authority to establish and maintain records.

At least 325 fraudulent social security cards were obtained as part of this scheme, and the co-conspirators submitted more than 100 false INS documents, including visas, in furtherance of the scheme. The social security numbers so obtained were used, *inter alia*, to open credit card accounts and to otherwise obtain things of value.

Graf obtained social security number 132-84-0310 in the name of Dimitry Fetrov through submission of an SS-5 application containing false information, and used it to open a VISA card account at Provident National Bank, which he used to obtain things of value through at least March

2001.

Graf also was aware that several sham corporations were created by Kravtsov and others, including TCI Net, Inc. and KDS Software, Inc., both companies purportedly located in Maryland, to make it appear as if the alien clients had employers in the United States at which they worked, when in fact no such corporations really existed.

In addition, Graf and another individual, Maxim Dovjenko, formed a company known as First Net Technology, Inc., which purportedly offered computer training to new immigrants in the New York area in exchange for government reimbursement at the approximate rate of \$4750 per student trained. During the course of the conspiracy, Graf and others kept track of personal, identifying information of their alien clients and used that information to create lists of bogus students who supposedly attended the training classes offered by First Net Technology, Inc. As part of the scheme to defraud, Graf, Kravtsov, Kolomitsyev, and others then caused those lists to be submitted for reimbursement to the City of New York through NYANA. At NYANA, Graf and others dealt directly with a NYANA case manager, Bianka Veret, who accepted bribes/kickbacks to process the reimbursement vouchers. Veret has also pled guilty to her role in the offense.

Andrei Kolomiytsev, Max Bekov and Jouri Matsiuk have also pled guilty. Matsiuk is scheduled to be sentenced before Judge Williams on June 14; Kolomiytsev is scheduled to be sentenced on June 21; and Veret is scheduled to be sentenced on August 9. No date has yet been set for Bekov.

The case is the result of an investigation by the Social Security Administration's Office of the Inspector General and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) of the Department of Homeland Security. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David I. Salem.